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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W
----------300555Z 028139 /21
R 300515Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3091
INFO AMCONGEN CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 6525

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BG
SUBJECT: FORMER PRESIDENT MUSHTAQUE FORMALLY CHARGED WITH CORRUPTION

REF: A. DACCA 6081 B. DACCA 6131

1. FORMER PRESIDENT KHONDAKAR MUSHTAQUE AHMAD WAS ARRAINED BY BDG ON DECMEMBER 29 WITH SEVERAL CHARGES OF CORRUPTION ARISING FROM HIS SERVICE AS MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOREIGN TRADE DURING MUJIB REGIME. MUSHTAQUE AND TEN OTHERS HAD BEEN ARRESTED NOVEMBER 29 (SEE REFTELS) AND HELD WITHOUT FORMAL CHARGES UNDER SPECIAL MARTIAL LAW REGULATIONS PERMITTING SUCH DETENTION. SO FAR NO FORMAL COMPLAINTS HAVE BEEN FILED AGAINST OTHERS ARRESTED THEN, BUT YESTERDAY'S ACTION INCLUDED TWO OTHERS: HIS BROTHER AND MOINUI ISLAM, ERSTWHILE SECRETARY IN MININSTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

2. CHARGES RELATE PRINCIPALLY TO FAVORITISM SHOWN AND RECEIPT OF "PECUNIARY ADVANTAGE" IN ISSUANCE OF IMPORT AND EXPORT PERMITS. ADDITIONAL ALLEGATIONS CLAIM CONFIDENTIAL

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MUSHTAQUE USED GOVERNMENT FUNDS AND MATERIALS TO IMPROVE HIS PERSONAL PROPERTY AT HIS HOME IN COMILLA DISTRICT: IT IS HERE THAT HIS BROTHER AND MOINUL ISLAM ARE INCLUDED.

3. BDG HANDOUT ADDS THAT "CERTAIN OTHER CHARGES" AGAINST MUSHTAQUE ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT

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SUBMERGED IN THIS VAGUENESS THERE IS SUGGESTION THAT
BDG IS LOOKING MORE CAREFULLY IN MUSHTAQUE'S ROLE, IF
ANY, IN THE DACCA CENTRAL JAIL MURDERS OF NOVEMBER, 1975.

4. COMMENT: WITH GOOD REASON, CONSIDERING THEIR
POTENTIAL BOTH IN ELECTIONS AND EXTRA-LEGALLY, BDG IS MORE
CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE STRENGTH OF TWO GROUPS: (1) MUSHTAQUE
AND HIS DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE AND (2) THE AWAMI LEAGUE,
THAT OTHER PARTIES AMONG THE TWENTY ODD WHICH HAVE BEEN
APPROVED FOR ACTIVITY. MLA IS ALSO UNDER SOME CRITICISM
FOR FAILURE TO "BRING TO BOOK" THOSE WHO ARE ACCUSED
OF CORRUPTION DURING MUJIB REGIME. BY PRESENT ACTION, BDG
HAS PARTIALLY RESPONDED TO THE CRITICISM AND HAS PUT MUSHTAQUE
ON SHELF FOR A LONG PERIOD. EVEN IF NOT CONVICTED, A
LONG TRIAL CAN BE EXPECTED. CHARGES AGAINST OTHER IN
NOVEMBER 29 ARRESTS ARE EXPECTED.
MASTERS

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